

The Diocese of Hallam
Section 48 Inspection Report

The Catholic Life of the School and Religious Education

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Creswick Lane, Grenoside, Sheffield S35 8NN

School URN	142600
Overall Effectiveness grade	Grade 2 GOOD
Date of inspection	03.05.2019
Name of Chair of Governors	Shaun Whorton and Gary Bragg (co-chairs)
Name of Head Teacher	Donna Faley
Name of RE Subject Leaders	Jessica Lord
Date of previous inspection	18.11.2013
Previous inspection grade	Grade 2
Section 48 Inspector(s)	Michael D’Rozario Diane Collins (Associate Inspector)

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection Grades: 1 is Outstanding, 2 is Good,
3 requires improvement in order to be good, 4 is Inadequate

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS: how effective the school is in providing Catholic Education.

2

The above judgement on overall effectiveness is based on all the available evidence following the evaluation of the following three sections:

CATHOLIC LIFE

2

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

OUTSTANDING (1)	To be judged OUTSTANDING for overall effectiveness: The three Section judgements must all be OUTSTANDING
GOOD (2)	To be judged GOOD for overall effectiveness: The three Section judgements must all be at least GOOD
REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT (3)	To be judged REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT for overall effectiveness: One or more sections will be judged to REQUIRE IMPROVEMENT with no sections judged inadequate.
INADEQUATE (4)	To be judged INADEQUATE for overall effectiveness: At least one Section will be judged inadequate.

Summary of key findings:

This is a GOOD Catholic Primary School

- Pupils at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School conduct themselves well and display excellent behaviour at all times, including in engagement in lessons. They can relate how the school's mission and values are visible around school and can state the ways in which they promote and support the mission of the school. They are respectful to both adults and their peers and are supportive of each other.
- The headteacher is instrumental in driving school improvement and has ensured that the shared mission of the school permeates every aspect of school life. This is a clear and inspiring expression of the educational mission of the Church.
- The Religious Education subject leader leads by example through her teaching and has a key role in promoting, monitoring and evaluating the religious character of the school. She is keen to drive the school towards excellence in all areas of the inspection process and works tirelessly, in collaboration with the headteacher, in the strategic planning for the Catholic life of the school and Religious Education (RE).
- Parents hold the school in high esteem and speak very positively about the nurturing their children receive and of the standard of education in all areas of the curriculum, including Religious Education.
- Religious Education is good overall, with pupils enjoying the varied and enriched curriculum, with interesting activities planned for them; and as a result pupils make good progress over time. Rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating standards in Religious Education are in place and will ensure a consistency in teaching, supporting the school in achieving even higher standards.
- Visits by the parish priest have been welcomed as he has offered educational support to the pupils and pastoral support to the school community. A new parish priest has recently been appointed to the parish.
- Governors are now working closely with the school and have helped to identify its priorities and wish to play a full part in helping the school improve further.
- The contribution that pupils make to the Catholic life of the school is recognised through their witness to the mission of the school, support for those less fortunate than themselves and striving for 'The Common Good'.

What the school needs to do to improve further.

- To provide further opportunities for pupils to plan and lead acts of Collective Worship throughout the school and for school leaders to monitor and evaluate Collective Worship so as to further improve provision.

- To embed the recently introduced assessment procedures, recommended by the Diocese, so that they become more robust and so that pupils' progress is measured accurately.
- To ensure that the quality of teaching in RE is consistently good and/or outstanding
- To enhance the role of school governance with regard to the Catholic nature of the school through its promotion, monitoring and evaluation of provision of Collective Worship, Religious Education and the Catholic life of the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspection of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School was carried out under the requirements of the Education Act 2005, and in accordance with the Hallam Diocesan Framework and Schedule for Section 48 Inspections approved by the Diocesan Administrator of Hallam. The inspection reviews and evaluates how effective the school is in providing Catholic education. This process begins with the school's own self-evaluation and the inspection schedule follows the criteria set by the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers (NBRIA 2017).

The inspectors reviewed in detail the following aspects:

- The school's self-evaluation document (DSEF)
- Action plans for RE
- Previous and current inspection reports and information about the school
- Pupils' contribution to the Catholic life of the school
- The Religious Education curriculum
- Acts of Collective Worship
- Pupil data for RE and the achievement of pupils

The inspection was carried out by one inspector and one associate inspector over the course of one day and the following activities were undertaken:

- Scrutiny of the Diocesan Self-Evaluation Document and action plans
- Lesson observations
- Interviews with the head teacher, RE subject leader, school governors, pupils and parents.
- Scrutiny of school policies and reports
- Scrutiny of the school website
- A learning walk
- Observation and participation in acts of Collective Worship that included a key stage liturgy, celebration assembly and Collective Worship in class.

Information about this school

- St Thomas More Catholic Primary, A Voluntary Academy (date of conversion 1st February 2016) is situated in Grenoside, Sheffield. The school serves the parish of St Thomas More.
- It is an average sized primary school whose pupils are drawn from a wide geographical area with average levels of social disadvantage when compared to all primary schools in Sheffield.
- The school has been judged to be 'good' at the most recent Ofsted inspection.

- Over the last two years the school and its community has been stable, with pupils leaving only when they have moved out of the area.
- The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- Historically, on-entry data indicates children enter Foundation 2 slightly below nationally expected levels.
- Since the last inspection the school has a new deputy head teacher and a new RE lead.
- The vast majority of teachers were not in post at the previous inspection. 75% of teachers are baptised Catholic, as are 54% of support staff.
- There have been significant changes to the governing body since the last inspection – a co-chair model was adopted in February 2019 along with the appointment of a new vice-chair. Only one of the current governors was in post at the previous inspection.

Full Report – Inspection Judgements

CATHOLIC LIFE

The quality of the Catholic Life of the school is GOOD

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	2
The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school	2

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school is GOOD

- Pupils have a real pride in their school, having a sense of belonging, able to explain how they promote the mission statement in their daily lives through their relationships within the school community. Pupils say, ‘We get taught to treat people as we want to be treated’. They respect the school’s Catholic tradition and its links with the parish and local community.
- Pupils contribute to the ‘Greater Good’, through numerous fundraising events to support those less fortunate than themselves. This includes supporting charities such as CAFOD, Hallam Caring Service, Mission Together, the local food bank as well as the Sheffield Children’s Hospital.
- Pupils comment on the respect they have for one other and about their excellent behaviour in class and around school and how they meet the high expectations demanded of them. The Playground Leaders set up games during lunchtimes and are positive role models for younger pupils and the ‘Job Squad’ take on further responsibilities when called upon to help out in school. The ‘Holy Helpers’ in the Year 6 class help prepare for acts of Collective Worship.
- Pupils state that they are treated fairly and relate well to the adults working in school and are taught how to look after each other, as all play their part in respect, care and forgiveness. They make reference to the Gospel values of love, kindness, acceptance, forgiveness and friendship that the mission statement espouses, and that by following them, they become better people.
- Pupils related details of some of the liturgical celebrations and Masses, such as the Lenten and Easter liturgies, diocesan themes of Family of Faith and Year of Mercy and school masses that they have celebrated. Pupils know the liturgical cycle and parents and governors are impressed with their knowledge of the Catholic traditions.
- Pupils have developed a deeper understanding of the importance of key celebrations in school and in church throughout the liturgical year. School pilgrimages, including the CAFOD

pilgrimage in school, the Year 4 visit to Padley and the Year 6 retreat in church, benefit pupils in their formation and provide them time for reflection and prayer. Plans are also being considered for pupils to take an even greater role in contributing to the Catholic life of the school by providing them with further opportunities to prepare and lead class liturgies and acts of Collective Worship.

- Pupils enjoy and benefit from the range of responsibilities presented to them and undertake their duties well. Older pupils speak of how they guide and encourage younger pupils in play and other aspects of school life.
- The parish priest has contributed to the Catholic life of the school, offering pastoral support and guidance when visiting the school.
- Pupils can empathise with and appreciate the circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves when discussing moral and social issues in class and assemblies and are proactive in their support for many local and national charities.
- Pupils address moral and social issues through the topics they cover in school such as democracy, justice and freedom and how 'ordinary' people can make a difference. They have a sense of right and wrong and how to address the latter.
- Parents state that they are kept informed of the activities that their children undertake in school, including liturgies, masses and celebrations that support its Catholic life through the school website and newsletters. They were grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Diocesan School Self Evaluation process through the online questionnaire.
- Parents reported that their children feel safe in school and that their contributions are valued. They are provided with opportunities to engage with the Catholic life of the school by attending school liturgies, assemblies and masses and support 'homework' which aims to involve parents and carers. The Gospel values, they say, are linked to behaviour and relationships both within and out of school.
- Outcomes for pupils are improving as they become more confident and independent learners with positive attitudes to school life. They comment on the supportive environment of the school and they know how and when to seek advice and support.
- Governors state that pupils are well prepared to continue to make a valuable contribution to the local and wider community when they become adults.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is **OUTSTANDING**

- The school community has a strong identity and a sense of unity. Parents value the level of care provided for pupils and the opportunities presented to them. The mission statement has been reviewed and parents appreciated the opportunity to be part of this process and that the expression, 'To love one another as I have loved you' is clearly visible throughout the school and is a clear expression of the commitment to live out Gospel values.
- The school environment reflects its mission and Catholic identity through high quality displays of the values it promotes and the visible signs of the school's distinctive nature including focal points for prayer in each classroom and topics covered within RE lessons. This is also evident and celebrated on the school website
- All staff are committed to the implementation of the school's reviewed mission statement and promote high expectations of behaviour; they are good role models of mutual respect and forgiveness for pupils. They participate in school activities which reflect the Catholic life of the school such as staff prayer, school pilgrimages and professional development offered in school and by the Diocese.
- A strong sense of community is evident in the quality of relationships that exist within the school community and parish as celebrated during the Easter liturgy, school masses and assemblies. This is a joyful community.
- Pastoral programmes such as Rainbows and counselling are in place to support pupils with access to outside agencies. School staff have access to counselling from outside agencies also, as well-being is given a high priority within the school.
- Education for Personal Relationships adheres to Diocesan requirements and Catholic teaching, with parents being fully informed of school policy and practice.
- The curriculum reflects a commitment to Catholic social teaching through its RE lessons, themes and topics, providing pupils with many opportunities to learn about democracy, fairness, diversity and equality as well as learning about how to resolve conflict.
- Pupils put what they have learned into action through their conduct in school and in the roles and responsibilities they hold, such as Holy Helpers, Class Ambassadors, Job Squad and Playground Leaders. Pupils express how much they enjoy contributing to this aspect of school life.
- The school community values its Catholic nature and is committed to its development through the reviewed mission statement. This aspect of school life continues to be held in high regard.
- Parents state that there is a clarity of mission which their children can articulate more clearly through the values promoted by the school and that these values are continually being reinforced and affirmed through liturgies, assemblies and reward systems.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision of the Catholic Life of the school is **GOOD**.

- The school leadership is deeply committed to the Church’s mission in education with governors, head teacher, deputy head teacher and RE co-ordinator promoting the Catholic life of the school through their involvement in governance, review of the mission statement and curriculum and fulfilment of the legal requirements.
- Provision for the Catholic life of the school is monitored by senior leaders through lesson observations, work scrutiny and learning walks and in evaluating the quality and impact of provision of the Catholic life of the school through discussion with all stakeholders. School will benefit from providing additional support for governors to monitor and evaluate this aspect.
- The school makes very good use of continuing professional development opportunities that focus on its Catholic life, including in-school professional development meetings, joint training days with the family of schools and by developing its mission statement through the involvement of stakeholders.
- Governors are familiar with the outcomes of the school and of its priorities and a recent visit by the link governor for RE proved to be very informative as the learning walk provided much evidence of the Catholic life of the school. Future visits to school are planned and the most recent set of pupil data will allow them to monitor progress in meeting agreed targets set through self-evaluation, audits and action plans.
- School leaders, and in particular the head teacher and RE co-ordinator, demonstrate a strong commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school and provide a good example for the rest of the community. The development of the Catholic Life of the school is viewed by leaders as a core leadership responsibility.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The quality of Religious Education is **GOOD**

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education	1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is GOOD

- The school follows the Come and See programme and moderates its assessment within school and the Sheffield Catholic Schools Partnership, and makes good use of the guidance offered by the Diocese.
- Quality resources, from a wide range of sources, including CAFOD, together with new technologies, enhance the learning environment and provide for an interesting and varied curriculum.
- School assessment data shows that majority of pupils make at least good progress in RE and staff are confident in levelling work.
- Pupils are keen to respond to questions and challenges presented to them and engage in classwork. They state that they enjoy the varied activities planned for them including art, drama, new technologies and cross curricular themes alongside their written work.
- Pupils with additional needs are making progress comparable to the progress of other groups and can access the RE curriculum. Parents speak strongly about the inclusiveness of the school and how it has enabled their child to thrive and experience success.
- Pupils benefit from the support and guidance offered to them in lessons and were able to discuss some of the topics covered and the work they had completed to date such as Lent and Easter, their current topic of Pentecost and Diocesan themes of Family of Families and the Year of Mercy.
- The majority of pupils concentrate well and understand how well they are doing as they are provided with opportunities to respond to marking and feedback and further improve their classwork.
- Behaviour in lessons is excellent. The majority of pupils enjoy RE lessons and display positive attitudes when working individually or collaboratively as lessons are made interesting and relevant to them. The reward system is a good strategy, not only for application to classwork, but for promoting positive attitudes in class and around school.
- Pupils said that they love learning about new things within their RE topics and of the life of Jesus and his disciples through scripture. They enjoy the varied activities within their RE topics such as some of the historical aspects through the depiction of bible stories through the eyes of great artists. They say that their responses are valued.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of respect for those of other faiths and are taught to value and respect other religious beliefs. They study the world faiths of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism in their RE lessons.
- Pupils will benefit from further differentiation within RE lessons, as recognised by the school, so as to make even greater progress in lessons and over time.

- Pupils are becoming more religiously literate and are developing skills appropriate to their age and abilities, offering thoughtful responses that demonstrate a clear understanding of scripture. They are improving their knowledge and understanding in RE and are developing their competence as learners when presented with more challenging classwork that extends and deepens their learning. They are given time to respond to questions and articulate their views.
- Homework for RE is comprised of fun and interesting activities and is a vehicle for building partnerships with parents and carers as they are encouraged to engage and contribute to these activities, which inform them of what the children are learning in RE.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in Religious Education is GOOD

- The quality of teaching has improved as teachers become more confident with the Come and See Religious Education programme and develop a strength in subject knowledge.
- Teachers have taken advantage of professional development opportunities offered by the Diocese and are strengthening partnerships with other diocesan schools.
- The quality of teaching is supported by a range of teaching strategies deployed in lessons, including individual and collaborative work. The school has introduced the concept of the 'Growth Mindset', which promotes a love of learning, building upon resilience when faced with challenges, and pupils stated how much they enjoyed the latter.
- Teachers communicate high expectations about Religious Education to their pupils, the majority of whom respond positively when engaged in classwork, complete their tasks and explain their work to their peers.
- Teachers monitor the learning taking place and use questioning effectively to gauge the understanding of pupils and invite them to respond. Some pupils are encouraged to pose their own questions and thereby enhance their thinking skills.
- Teachers have begun to involve older pupils in evaluating their classwork and this will inform them on how to further improve their work and make even better progress.
- Lesson time is used effectively in most lessons, with a good pace, and this secures good learning. Best practice could be shared throughout the school in order to maximise learning and challenge pupils further.
- Planning is in place with clear learning intentions and takes into account prior learning. It could be further improved by taking into account pupils' prior achievement and attainment and include a range of differentiated tasks in order for them to make better progress.

- Work scrutiny and RE assessments have been undertaken and judgements strengthened through in-school moderation and with other schools within the Diocese
- Good quality resources optimise learning for most pupils and there has been much investment in these, including educational visits and visitors to school including the 'In Reality' team.
- The contribution that other adults make in supporting the quality of teaching is valued and the higher level teaching assistant is effective when planning and teaching RE, under the guidance and support of the RE co-ordinator.
- Achievement and effort are celebrated and rewarded during celebration assemblies. Pupils state that they are affirmed when rewarded in this way. Parents comment on the value of these assemblies in promoting learning and achievement.
- The RE co-ordinator has monitored the quality of teaching and has undertaken work scrutiny and learning walks alongside senior colleagues and the governor for RE. This has informed an action plan and is shared with staff and governors.
- Parents state that they find information on the RE topics to be covered each half term very informative as the website and newsletters keep them up to date and signpost them to further information.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is OUTSTANDING.

- The school leadership team has identified school priorities following rigorous school self-evaluation, including the views of stakeholders, and have clear and consistent systems of monitoring and evaluating provision within Religious Education. They communicate this with governors effectively.
- Governors discharge their canonical and statutory duties effectively and the Religious Education curriculum meets Episcopal requirements regarding curriculum time for Religious Education.
- In terms of professional development and resourcing of Religious Education, leaders and governors ensure that it is comparable to other core subjects, making good use of collaboration with local schools and the Diocese.
- The RE co-ordinator has an inspiring vision for outstanding teaching and with the support of the senior leadership team and in particular, the head teacher, is well-placed to move the school forward and drive the school improvement areas identified by this inspection.
- School leaders have ensured that the RE curriculum is imaginatively and thoughtfully planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils in order for them to not only access the curriculum, but experience success.

- The link governor for Religious Education has visited the school and conducted a learning walk with the RE co-ordinator. This, with pupil data on the achievement of pupils in RE, is informing further school improvement plans which will then be evaluated.
- The school has introduced systems for tracking, monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning including Religious Education and are measuring its impact.
- Class teachers undertake termly assessments in order to measure pupil progress and inform further improvement. Moderation within the school and with other schools within the Diocese has secured accurate judgements. Pupil data is then forwarded to the Diocese after scrutiny.
- Parent surveys through the online questionnaire, seeks the views of parents, who state that they are pleased with the outcomes for pupils and how their pupils benefit from the teaching, care and experiences they receive in school.
- Governors speak of their increased capacity for school improvement, including RE, and are confident that the recommendations identified during the inspection will be met.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The quality of Collective Worship is GOOD

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1
The quality of provision for Collective Worship	2
How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship	1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is OUTSTANDING

- Pupils at St Thomas More Catholic School act with reverence and respect during acts of Collective Worship and participate in communal prayers appropriately, with reverence, respond positively and are attentive. They enjoy communal singing and respond enthusiastically.
- Pupils enjoy participating in a range of liturgical worship. When talking about the opportunities to engage in worship, they are keen to share their experiences and some could describe the Lenten and Easter liturgies and masses attended. All pupils and staff enjoy and participate in the whole school celebration assembly and this is an example of the school's inclusiveness.
- Older pupils appointed as Holy Helpers prepare for assemblies, liturgies and acts of Collective Worship with confidence, are enthusiastic and independent. Other pupils are engaged by opportunities for worship planned by their peers at the end of the RE topics. Providing more opportunities for all pupils throughout school, appropriate to their age, to plan and lead Collective Worship, modelled and supported by school staff, would lead to deeper spiritual and moral development.
- Collective Worship reflects the liturgical year and is planned to provide pupils with enriched experiences including pilgrimages within school, in church and at Padley. During the inspection, portfolios presented some examples of the different aspects of liturgical worship.
- Pupils commented on their Collective Worship books in class and appreciated the time to pray in class with their peers and they would like this to continue throughout the year.
- Parents stated that they value and appreciate pupils' participation in Collective Worship within the parish and feel privileged to attend liturgies, assemblies and mass in school.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is GOOD

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and worship is celebratory and engaging. All members of the community feel valued, included and engaged in this aspect of school life.
- Pupils have the opportunity to pray together, with every class having a prayer focus that reflects the liturgical year and private intentions with their prayer journals.
- Parents and parishioners are invited to attend acts of Collective Worship in church and in school appreciate the opportunity of doing so.
- Masses and liturgical celebrations are held in school and parents and parishioners are made to feel very welcome.
- Pupils are being introduced to prayer in a variety of ways including formal prayers and their own prayers within class. They pray in class and as a whole school community, coming together during assemblies and liturgies.
- Resources, including artefacts and focal points for prayer are utilised well. Pupils were able to explain that the lighted candle represented the light of Jesus.

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is **OUTSTANDING**

- Acts of Collective Worship are led well by adults, and in particular, the head teacher, who has expert knowledge on how to plan and deliver quality Collective Worship. She makes these accessible to pupils in a contemporary context, relating them to the mission of the school.
- The head teacher is a visible leader of Collective Worship in school and models outstanding practice for staff and pupils.
- Leaders have an extensive understanding of the Church's liturgical year, seasons and feast days. They act as role models for the school community.
- The school self-evaluation and improvement plan reflects the Catholic nature of the school and the governors are briefed on the provision of Collective Worship. The recently adopted Collective Worship policy will ensure that identified priorities will be met.
- Leaders actively seek the comments and views of parents through the online questionnaire on an annual basis and pupils' views are continually sought, with adaptations made to enhance provision for Collective Worship.
- Leaders have ensured that staff attend diocesan professional development and have made a commitment to send teaching staff to these as well as retreat days for school staff.
- Staff are provided with further opportunities to receive liturgical formation when they offer to lead staff prayer time at the beginning of each staff meeting and when helping pupils to plan and deliver acts of Collective Worship by sharing their expertise to support each other.
- Further development of the variety of methods and styles of prayer is continuing to grow and modelled well by school staff and leaders.
- Collective Worship is regularly reviewed as part of the self-evaluation process and this will ensure that identified priorities during the inspection will be addressed